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## *House of Representatives*

### **H.R. 2484 Women and Security Act**

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey... Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words in support of Representative KRISTI NOEM's Women, Peace and Security Act (H.R. 2484). Among other things, it highlights the role women must play in peacemaking.

In the limited time we have, I would just like to highlight the role of one woman who served as a peacemaker, whom I have had the opportunity to get to know—Nuala O'Loan, who served as the Police Ombudsman in Northern Ireland from 2000 to 2007, and someone who has contributed to our understanding in the Congress as she twice testified at hearings held on the Northern Ireland peace process.

Baroness O'Loan—she was made a Dame of the British Empire and a member of the House of Lords in recognition for her role in the cause of peace—had the difficult task of looking into how the police handled the Omagh bombing. That bombing, by a splinter group of the Irish Republican Army, was intended to reignite sectarian tension and stop the movement

towards peace that was memorialized in the Good Friday Agreement. The bomb was indiscriminate, however, killing both Protestant and Catholic alike, and helped underscore the need for peace.

In the ensuing years, Baroness O'Loan became known as an even-handed intermediary. Indeed, she was so even-handed that she was criticized by extremists on both sides, and her retirement party was boycotted by hardliners from the Unionist and Republican camps. On the other hand, the average citizen, whether Protestant or Catholic, supported her in her role as Police Ombudsman in roughly equal numbers, something that was borne out by independent polling.

Nuala O'Loan is but one example of a woman serving as peacemaker. There are many more Nualas around the world, and I applaud Congresswoman NOEM for encouraging us to recognize the role these women play in helping bring a little light to the darkness.